Monday, October 27, 2014

Caroline Fawkes
 Supervisor of Elections, Election System of the Virgin Islands
PO Box 1499
Kingshill, St. Croix, USVI 00851

Sent via email to caroline.fawkes@vi.gov

RE: DS200 and AutoMARK functionality

Dear Ms. Fawkes :

Per your request please accept the following information regarding the DS200 system that is operating in USVI.

With regards to the straight party functionality and the DS200 ES&S would like to provide the following information on straight party voting and the functionality as federally certified by the EAC. According to the website for the National Conference of State Legislatures (www.nscl.org) there are currently 14 states that offer straight party voting. In all of these states a direct selection of a candidate in a vote for one contest takes precedence over the straight party selection and does not create an over vote situation for that contest. These states do differ as to how they handle straight party versus direct selections in multiple vote for offices, but again the straight party selection does not take precedence over direct selections by a voter.

  The DS200 will:

1. Allow the voter to select the desired candidate(s) for each office by filling in the oval next to the candidate name or by writing in the name of a candidate not on the ballot in the space provided and by also filling in the oval next to the space. Votes for the selected candidates will be tabulated as long as the number of selections do not exceed the votes allowed. If there are more direct selections for candidates in a contest than is allowed, a number of overvotes will be tabulated equal to the number of votes allowed.
2. Support a Straight Party contest on the ballot that will allow a voter to select all candidates of a desired party by filling in the oval next to the party name in the straight party contest. This will cause a vote to be tabulated for every candidate of that party in every contest that does not have additional candidate selections.
3. Not change the fact that all candidates of party selected in the Straight Party contest will receive a vote if a candidate is also selected in a contest that is of the same party and there are no other selections in the contest.
4. Allow the voter to vote a split ticket by selecting a desired party in the Straight Party contest and then selecting another candidate not of that party (or write in a candidate name) in an individual contest. If there is a full slate of candidates in the contest, only the individual candidate selections in the contest will receive a vote as long as the number of selections does not exceed the votes allowed.
5. Allow the voter to select additional candidates in a particular office if the party does not have a complete slate of candidates by selecting the desired party in the Straight Party contest and by also filling in the ovals of the additional desired candidates. Both the candidates of the selected party and the additionally selected

candidates not of that party will receive a vote as long as the total number of candidates from the selected party plus the addition candidate selections not of that party do not exceed the votes allowed. If the combination does exceed the votes allowed, only the selected candidates in the contest will receive votes, whether or not of the selected party.

The AutoMARK will:

1. When marking a ballot on the AutoMARK a voter can select a party option at the start of their marking session. If the voter chooses to select a party all candidates of that party will be marked on the screen as the voter scrolls through the contests.
2. If the voter chooses to select a candidate from another party in a vote for one contest, he/she will see his/her new selection highlighted on screen and receive an on screen notice that he/she are no longer voting a straight party ballot. The candidates of the selected party will remain chosen in all other contests.
3. In a vote for many contest, if the selected party has a full slate the voter will be instructed to deselect one candidate before another can be chosen and the same notice of no longer voting a straight party ballot will appear. The candidates of the selected party will remain chosen in all other contests.
4. In a vote for many contest, if the selected party does not have a full slate then a voter can add candidates up to the maximum number of selections. The candidates of the selected party will remain chosen in all other contests.
5. On the summary screen the straight party option will no longer show a selection and will not be marked on the ballot. The AutoMARK only marks a ballot; it does not tabulate any selections.

The EAC certified system currently installed in the USVI is EVS 5.0.0.0 which includes the ElectionWare programming software version 4.1.0.0, DS200 firmware version 2.7.0.0, AutoMARK firmware version 1.8.1.0 and Election Reporting Manager software version 8.6.0.0.

ES&S will work with the Virgin Islands to document in writing specific requirements related to straight party voting. After the scope of work is defined and associated costs involved in making such change, if any, are finalized we will then work with the testing lab and the Election Assistance Commission to determine the total expected length of time for certification, based on all known facts. Average test engagements can range from a few months to more than a year.

Please let me know if there is any additional information that we can provide to you.

With regards,

Linda Bennett

Linda Bennett

Regional Director of Customer Service

Election Systems and Software